

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /030 W

----- 116847

R 031305Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4847

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1734

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, IT

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH NEW DC SENATOR

1. EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND JUNIOR ECONOMIC OFFICER

LUNCHEDED AUGUST 2 WITH NEW DC SENATOR ELECTED AS

INDEPENDENT, WHO IS ALSO LEADING MILAN FINANCIAL FIGURE.

SENATOR SAW DC REVITALIZATION AS PRINCIPAL ANSWER TO

ITALY'S PROBLEMS AND UNHELPFUL ROLE OF PRESS AS MAJOR

OBSTACLE TO DC'S ABILITY TO GOVERN COUNTRY.

2. SENATOR FELT DC REVITALIZATION WAS ONLY REALISTIC

COURSE FOR THOSE WHO OPPOSE COMMUNISTS. SOCIALISTS

ARE IN MISERABLE SHAPE AND SENATOR DOES NOT BELIEVE

CRAXI OR ANYONE ELSE CAN PUT THEM BACK TOGETHER AGAIN.

LAY ALLIANCE ALTERNATIVE IS DEAD, HAVING FAILED IN

LAST ELECTIONS. SENATOR WAS ASKED WHETHER THREE-PARTY

ALLIANCE MIGHT NOT HAVE FARED BETTER WITH MORE

SUPPORT AND WEIGHTIER CANDIDATES. NOT SO, HE

ANSWERED. MONEY WAS NOT THEIR PROBLEM AND, HAD

GIANNI AGNELLI THOUGHT THEY WERE WORTH JOINING,

HE WOULD HAVE DONE SO.

3. DC, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS MADE SOME REAL

CHANGES. UMBERTO AGNELLI DID NOT LEAVE FIAT FOR

THE SENATE JUST TO SIT AROUND AND DO NOTHING. THERE

ARE OTHERS, TOO, WHO WILL BRING NEW IDEAS TO PARTY.

SENATOR WAS ESPECIALLY HIGH ON COMUNIONE E

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LIBERAZIONE PEOPLE: THEY HAVE LARGE POPULAR APPEAL

EVEN IF THEY ARE A BIT TOO "INTEGRALIST". SENATOR THOUGHT MASSIMO DECAROLIS "VERY RIGHT WING", BUT COMMENTED THAT PARTY NEEDS SOMEONE TO CHAMPION MIDDLE CLASSES. AND THERE IS NO QUESTION, HE SAID, OF DECAROLIS' CAPACITY AND COURAGE.

4. SENATOR STRESSED DC MUST IMPROVE PUBLIC RELATIONS BOTH BY SPOTLIGHTING PCI DEFECTS AND BY PUBLICIZING ITS OWN SUCCESSES. HE TOOK CASE OF COMMUNIST-RUN BOLOGNA, ENFIXED IN PUBLIC MIND AS MODEL OF GOOD ADMINISTRATION. BOLOGNA, HE SAID, IS ABOUT SAME SIZE AS BRESCIA YET BRESCIA'S DC ADMINISTRATION CARRIES ABOUT HALF AS MANY EMPLOYEES ON ITS PAYROLL AS BOLOGNA AND IS IN MUCH BETTER FINANCIAL SITUATION THAN BOLOGNA. THESE ARE KINDS OF FACTS THAT DC SHOULD BE PRESENTING TO PUBLIC.

5. SENATOR RETURNED SEVERAL TIMES TO WHAT BY END OF CONVERSATION HAD BECOME HIS MOST INSISTENT THME: DAMAGING BEHAVIOR OF ITALIAN PRESS. THOSE WHO FINANCE ITALY'S NENNWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES MUST BE MADE TO SEE WHAT HARM THEY ARE DOING AND ACT ACCORDINGLY. ONLY EXCEPTION TO RULE IS IL GIORNALE, WHOSE CIRCUOLATION HAS LATELY RISEN TO 400,000, NOT AT ALL BAD IN COMPARISON WITH 600,000 FOR CORRIERE DELLA SERA. AS FOR LATTER, ITS NEWS POLICY IS CONFUSION AT BEST AND DOWNRIGHT LEFTIST AT WORST. EDITOR PIERO OTTONE IS, ON ONE HAND, BESET WITH COMMUNIST SUBEDITORS WHOM HE IS TOO WEAK TO CONTROL, AND ON THE OTHER, WANTS TO BE IN VOGUE. TO BE IN VOGUEIS, ALAS, TO BE LEFTIST. SENATOR WAS ASKED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF DC INVESTING IN NEWSPAPER. HE SAID POSSIBILITY EXISTED AND WAS BEING DISCUSSED, BUT DID NOT ELABORATE.

6. WITHIN PARLIAMENT, SENATOR SAID HE AND OTHER LIKEMINDED INDIVIDUALS (PRESUMABLY INCLUDING UMBERTO AGNELLI) HAVE FORMED INFORMAL GROUP WHICH HE HOPES WILL, IN TIME, HAVE INFLUENCE. ONE OF GROUP'S INITIATIVES IS ATTEMPT TO PUT PROFESSIONALS AND EXPERTS AT SERVICE OF DC PARLIAMENTARIANS SO "WE WILL KNOW WHAT WE ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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TALKING ABOUT." SENATOR SAID SUCH PROFESSIONAL STAFFS ARE NOW LACKING. WRIGHT

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, MEETINGS, SOCIAL RECEPTIONS, POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 03 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976MILAN01734  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760299-0509  
**From:** MILAN  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760892/aaaaddgj.tel  
**Line Count:** 109  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 03 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <03 MAY 2004 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CONVERSATION WITH NEW DC SENATOR  
**TAGS:** PINT, PGOV, IT, US, (AGNELLI, GIANNI)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006